WORDS OF RECONCILIATION.

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DR. BACON'S SERMONS.

Dr. Leonard Woolsey Bacon has recently published a volume of sermons under the title, "The Simplicity that is in Christ." Usually volumes of sermons find but few readers beyond the circle of the author's immediate friends and admirers. But we predict for this volume a much wider reading. The topics discussed are largely the ordinary themes of pulpit ministration. But these themes, always profoundly interesting in themselves, are often made dull by the hackneyed forms and phrases in which they are presented, and by a slavish adherence to technical and traditional explanations of them. But the author of these sermons believes that "where the Spirit of the Lord is, there is liberty," and that no man can properly preach the gospel who does not freely surrender himself to His guidance. Hence, there is a freedom and boldness, a frankness and freshness, in his way of handling the Word of God, and in applying it to the needs and consciences of men, which must secure attention, and which cannot fail to instruct and profit. There is also evidence throughout that the preacher is familiar with the freshest thinking of the day, in those departments of human thought and scientific research which most engage men's minds. The sermon, entitled "A Corollary of Evolution," turns the enemy's guns against himself in a most masterly way.

One of the chief traits of Dr. Bacon's mind is intellectual honesty. He will not consent to cover up difficulties with a sham, or take refuge from them behind a traditional formula, nor frame his statements for the express purpose of concealing them. It is this which has blocked his way into a permanent pastorate in the Presbyterian Church, where men even more loosely orthodox than he would have made for themselves a smooth passage. The more's the pity that the discipline of that church seemed, in the judgment of a majority of the Presbytery, to require his exclusion; for scarcely any other Protestant communion has greater need of such men as he. The intellectual domination of received systems or revered teachers may be just as fatal to the spiritual freedom of a church as the personal domination of a Pope. And, therefore, the presence of such men as Dr. Bacon in that church, who, even when mistaken, is yet frank and honest, is the more needed to keep alive in it the liberty wherewith Christ hath made us free.

We have not time and space to go over these sermons in detail and point out their many excellencies, nor their occasional defects. In the sermon on the structure of Scripture, we observe passages that do not carefully discriminate between *progress* and *imperfection* of doctrine. The moral standard in the Song of Deborah falls below that laid down in the Sermon on the Mount, but it was suited to the times and age in which it was written, and to the stage of moral development to which the chosen people had then attained. It was inspiration, moving on a lower level, and yet perfectly adapted to its end.

We must confine, however, our review to the sermons

on topics which touch the special lines of testimony we have followed in this magazine.

We notice first, with satisfaction, a clear and emphatic protest against the common view that the soul of man is an "indestructible essence," immortal in its own nature. Dr. Bacon finds no warrant for this notion, either in philosophy, science, or Scripture, and speaks strongly of how it has blunted the force of the reiterated statement of Scripture, that men receive eternal life only as God gives it to them through Jesus Christ, and how it has also weakened the foundations of the Christian faith, in depreciating the doctrine of the resurrection. We quote as follows:

> What kind of consequences have followed from this long, inveterate habit of talking as if man were immortal in himself, by his own nature, as the heathen used to teach, instead of having no immortality but what God gives him through Jesus Christ? For it has gotten into our theologies, and our preaching, and our habits of speech—this notion of the soul of man as essentially incapable of death. It is taught as belonging to natural theology, a fact of nature which men can know by their own reason, and which is only confirmed by the Gospel, And is it altogether strange that after the church had been trained for some centuries to believe that all men are sure of immortality any way, it should occur to some, by-and-by, to doubt whether there was any such great importance to the world in the resurrection of Jesus Christ? And if the resurrection of Christ was not essentially needed, how very unlikely that there was any resurrection of Christ! So reasoned David Strauss, and lost his own faith in the risen Lord, and shipwrecked the faith of thousands of others with his own.

Here and there, however, we meet with an expression on this point which might have been more carefully guarded. The author does not hold that the life of a

wicked man goes out finally at death. And yet such words as these might create that impression: "That which man hath is just this little span of mortal life, and then death." In the next sermon on the "resurrection of the unjust," the wicked are plainly warned that retribution awaits them in the life to come, but the preacher does not always make it clear that the *soul* of this class survives the body, and continues to suffer, and may be "destroyed in hell" before its resurrection, and that it is only at the second death that the light of its life goes out forever.

But it is at this point of the purpose of the resurrection of the unjust that Dr. Bacon's eschatology is most defective. He starts out in this sermon with what we believe to be a serious error, in affirming that the Old Testament word translated "hell" (Sheol), "never refers to the state of suffering or punishment, nor to the state of the wicked dead, but simply to the state of all the dead, irrespectively of their suffering or happiness, their good or ill desert." He thus falls into the very common mistake of supposing that because Sheol is represented as the abode or state of all the dead, good and bad, it is never viewed as a state of suffering or punishment. On the contrary, it is never viewed in any other light. The righteous never looked forward to going down to Sheol in any other way than as a penalty for sin,—their own and the common sin of the race. In the Old Testament conception, Sheol is always a retributive state. Even where it means "the grave," it is none the less that death-state which is the wages of man's sin. The good man believed, indeed, that God

would save and deliver him there, that his soul would not be left in Sheol, and that for the upright there would soon arise light in its darkness, while the wicked would be held fast in its gloom.

Here indeed is the grave mistake in all our current eschatology. It fails to see that the wicked are not only punished in hell before the resurrection, but that, *for the sins of this life*, this death-state (Sheol) is the very period of their punishment. It is from the failure to see this that Dr. Bacon, and theologians generally, reserve the stress of the sinner's punishment until after his resurrection, which, in this view, becomes to him aggravated retribution. They are compelled, therefore, to overlook or explain away all those parts of Scripture which refer the resurrection of all men to the redemptive work of Christ, and to put off their hearers with a bungling explanation as to why God should recover these masses from their bondage in death and hell, and as to where comes in the grace of providing in Christ that all shall be made alive. We regret, therefore, that Dr. Bacon, in this sermon, does not rise to any larger view or hope of the resurrection of the unjust than that they are raised to be judged and punished. He does not see that it is possible that even a "resurrection of judgment" may be far better than no resurrection at all, and that the judgment of all humanity by the Divine Son of Man is a far broader work than the holding of a grand assize.

And yet, we are glad to say, the general drift of our author's eschatology is in the line of broad and large hopes in man's Redeemer, and of a perfect faith in the equitable justice of God. We are quite sure that if we

were to discuss these topics with him, with opportunity for a perfect measurement of our differing points of view, we should find many points of sympathy.

The matters we have criticized are, however, but incidental in a volume which is full of large and precious and useful thoughts of God, and of His wondrous ways. We heartily commend it to our readers.

We conclude by saying that we cannot commend too highly the noble stand taken by Dr. Bacon, and which especially comes out in the closing sermon, in refusing at any point to subordinate his position as a minister of the Lord Jesus, and a servant of His one church, to the interests of any particular denomination or the defence of any uninspired system. He believes that he best serves his own church, who best serves the One Church of the One Lord, and that it is the calling of a servant of the truth to preach the Word as God may make it known to him, without being compelled to first adjust it to human standards, however carefully devised. That he was obliged to submit to the severance of his relation to the Woodland Church, which earnestly, after two years' experience of them, desired his pastoral services, shows his readiness to suffer for his religious convictions, and that he deemed no sacrifice of ministerial ease and apparent success too great in order to preserve a conscience sincere and without offence before God and man. If fidelity to "the system" required the rejection of such a man, we can only say that it is time that the foundations of the system were broadened from those of a sect into those of a church of God.

"THE PLAN OF THE AGES."

By Rev. A. P. Adams, in *The Spirit of the Word.*

This phrase is a very comprehensive and striking one; the word "Plan" implies wisdom, forethought, power; the expression, "the Ages," indicates breadth, duration, immensity. The whole phrase is one to command attention and respect, and one that strikes us with a feeling akin to awe. The Plan of the Ages! What is this wondrous plan that takes ages for its accomplishment? what is its object? who is its projector and executor?

In answering these questions I would first call attention to the fact that this phrase is scriptural; we have this exact expression in Eph. iii. 11. In the common version the grand thought suggested by this expression is smothered under a mistranslation. We have "the eternal purpose," instead of the correct translation, the *purpose* or *plan of the ages.* (See the New Version.) This expression is not then a theological phrase, man-made, without scriptural warrant, and hence deceptive and misleading. It is a phrase coined by the Spirit of God, and set down in Holy Writ as expressing a grand and glorious truth for the thought and study of the "man of God." In considering this phrase, then, we are entering upon a legitimate and important *Bible* study. We are not speculating. We are not "theorizing;" we are not prying into forbidden secrets. We are simply "searching the Scriptures," in order that we may know "the mind of the Spirit" when it indited this pregnant expression. Let us examine first the context. In this chapter, Paul is considering one of God's "mysteries."

is a hidden truth that is exactly *timed;* that is, to say it is a truth that is to be seen and understood at a particular period, the "due season," and God keeps that truth concealed and "hid" until that "due season" arrives (Rom. xvi. 25, 26; Col. i. 26). God's mysteries (Matt. xiii. 11) are not discovered and dug out by man's superior wit or learning, or piety, or perseverance, but they are *revealed* to those who are walking in the shining pathway (Prov. iv. 18), in God's "due season"—*i. e.*, when they are "*present* truth" (2 Peter i. 12).

The mystery here set forth is that of the One Body—the mystical body of which Christ is the head and "they that are Christ's" are the members; Paul says that this mystery was made known to him, "the least of all saints," that he might "make all men see the dispensation" (stewardship or administration; see N. V. and E. D.) of it, "*To the intent* that now unto the principalities and powers in heavenly places might be known by the church the manifold wisdom of God, according to a plan of the ages which he made in Christ Jesus our Lord."

Mark the drift of this passage. Here is a great truth, previously hid but "now made known," whereof Paul was made a minister to make known unto *all* men its administration, *i. e.*, its character and purpose; this great truth embodies "*the unsearchable riches of Christ*" and manifests "*the manifold wisdom of God*," to the intent that even unto the principalities and powers in the heavenlies *through means of the assembly* these things might ultimately be made known; and finally, all this wonderful and intricate arrangement is not the outgrowth

of chance or mere fortuitous circumstances, but is according to a pre-determined *plan*, which in its stupendous sweep spans the *ages*, past, present, and to come. Now this is interesting. The grandeur and magnitude of this work marks it as most momentous, and commands our serious thought and study. What does it all mean? There are very few Christians who have any idea whatever of this great plan of the ages. The majority of believers are very easily contented with the merest knowledge of Christ as a Saviour, without any thought—much less study—of God's purposes and methods.

Before studying further this passage in Ephesians, we will examine one in Romans viii.; afterwards, if I err not, we shall be better able to understand this.

ROMANS VIII. 19–23.

I will give a translation of this passage collated from the New Version, Rotherham, the Emphatic Diaglott, and Young, not because these materially alter the rendering from the common version; the latter contains every essential idea of the original, but it is not quite so plain and clear as some of these other more recent translations. Hence, I use all the helps I can to bring out the full meaning of the original. " The earnest expectation of the creation waiteth for the revelation of the sons of God. For the creation was made subject to vanity—not of its own will —but by reason of Him (God) who subjected it *in hope* that even the creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God. For we know that the whole creation groaneth and travaileth in pain together until now;

and not only so but ourselves also, who have the first fruit of the Spirit, even we ourselves groan within ourselves waiting for sonship—the redemption of our body."

Let us now notice in detail some of the points in this passage that make it difficult to harmonize with the current creeds. First, the whole creation is represented as earnestly *waiting* for something—the revelation of the *sons* of God. Who are these "sons" of God? We know the Son of God, the Lord Jesus Christ, but who are these *sons?* Why is the whole creation waiting for them? What is meant by their revelation? When are they to be revealed, and what will they do when thus revealed? These are intensely interesting questions, but to none of them does the popular theology give any reasonable answer. Furthermore, this passage teaches that the creation was *made* subject to vanity, not of its own will, but by the will of another. If we wish to know what is meant by the term "vanity," read Ecclesiastes, and compare Paul's expression in Gal. iv. 9, "the weak [frail, vain] and beggarly elements, whereunto ye desire again to be in *bondage;*" this also harmonizes with the teachings of the passage we are examining, for in it we are taught that the "bondage of corruption" is included in the "vanity," to which the creation was made subject. Now the creation was *made* subject to this "vanity," *not* of its own will, but by God.

Let the reader notice that this great thought is not a mere *inference* from this passage, it is not some one's *explanation* of the passage; it is directly announced. No one who reverences the Scriptures can ignore this plain

statement, however they may explain it. The popular belief is that man * of his own free will, and *contrary* to the will of God, chose vanity, *i. e.*, sin and corruption, and the result will be that vast numbers will never be delivered therefrom. This passage teaches the exact opposite of this—in fact, we have here another theological reversal. Here we are taught that mankind was *made* subject to vanity—the bondage of corruption—NOT of its own will, but by the will of another, and that other none less than the Creator himself; man did *not* make himself subject to this fallen state, but was *made* so by God, and that too *in hope* that the creation—the same that was made subject—"that even the creation itself shall be delivered from the bondage of corruption into the liberty of the glory of the children of God."

The apostle goes on, "And not only they, but ourselves also, which have the first fruit of the Spirit, even we ourselves, groan within ourselves, waiting for sonship —the redemption of our body." Here is another scripture for which the popular theology has no room in any of its creeds. "We that have the first fruit of the Spirit!" What does that mean? We "groan within ourselves waiting"—what for? not for the same thing that the *creation* is waiting for, but for something entirely different, viz., "the sonship, to wit, the redemption of our body."

This blessed scripture becomes clear and comprehen-

* I do not know that it is needful for me to notice that the term "creation," as used in this passage, applies to mankind, just as in Mark xvi. 15, and Col. i. 23, where exactly the same word occurs.

sible in the light of the "Plan of the Ages," as set forth in the length and breadth of God's Word. I will try if I can help the reader to its true meaning.

The "Plan of the Ages" is the arrangement whereby man is to be created in the image and likeness of God. The plan covers the whole work from the creation in Eden of the undeveloped Adam, "who was a *figure*" of the true and perfect man who "was to come" (Rom. v. 14), to the "dispensation of the fullness of times, when all things in heaven and earth shall be gathered together" *in* this Perfect man (Eph. i. 10). The "Ages" are the periods or dispensations into which God's plan was divided in respect to time. The Bible speaks of ages *past* (Col. i. 26) and "ages *to come*" (Eph. ii. 7). It is very important that we should understand this Bible subject of the *ages*, if we would understand the "*plan* of the ages."

This plan is not simply a "plan of *redemption*," as it is sometimes called, *i. e.*, a way provided whereby man might be recovered from the effects of the fall, but it is a plan of *Creation*, embracing the fall of man and the work of redemption as simply necessary steps in its development. The object of the plan then is the accomplishment of the purpose announced in Eden, "Let us make man in our image, after our likeness, and let them have dominion." This is the grand and glorious object. Now what is the method of this marvellous plan?

The *method* is first announced when God pronounced the curse upon the serpent (Gen. iii. 15), "I will put enmity between thee and the woman and between thy seed and her seed, he shall bruise thy head and thou shalt

bruise his heel." The key-word here is "Seed." Any one who would take the trouble to follow this word by the help of a concordance through the Bible, and do it thoughtfully and carefully, would be astonished at the glorious truth it would open up. Such an one would be really following up the great subject of

THE PROMISED SEED.

All Christians agree that this "seed of the woman" that is to destroy "that old serpent, the devil," is Christ. (Compare Heb. ii. 14.) Christ also is the promised seed "in whom all the families of the earth are to be blessed." The promise to Abraham (Gen. xii. 3; xxii. 18; xxviii. 14), repeated over and over again throughout the Bible, did not begin to be fulfilled in its true sense "until the seed came to whom the promise was made," "which seed is Christ" (Gal. iii. 16, 19). Isaac was the "seed of promise" according to the flesh (Gen. xxi. 12; Rom. ix. 7), but Christ is the real, true, Abrahamic seed according to the *spirit* of the Word; and He it is who shall destroy the devil, and in whom all the families of the earth shall be blessed.

Christ is the promised seed, but He is not the *whole* seed, but only a part of it. The "seed" is not a single individual, but a *class*, a *company*, that yet constitute but *one* body, of which Christ stands as the head. This promised seed is, in short, the company of "the sons of God" for whom the whole creation waits with such earnest longing. It will at once be seen that this thought of the promised seed not being a single individual, but a class, represented in the Bible as a mystical body having many members, of which Christ is the head and "begin-

ning" (Col. i. 18) is in wonderful accord with the teachings of the passage we are especially examining; and when it is seen also to be in perfect harmony with many other Scriptures—when in fact we see that it is impossible to harmonize and understand Scripture without this thought, then we shall have no difficulty in accepting it as truth. I do not say that this doctrine lies upon the surface of Holy Writ, but I do say that it can be readily traced by all who will study and "search" the Word. In the same chapter already referred to, where we are told that the promised Abrahamic seed is Christ, we also read, "And if ye be Christ's, then are ye Abraham's seed, and heirs according to the promise" (Gal. iii. 29). In verse 16 of this same chapter, great stress is laid upon the fact that the promised seed is a unit. "He saith not, and to seeds, as of many, but as of one, and to thy seed, which is Christ." In the last verse of this chapter, Paul seems to contradict this emphatic assertion of the unity of the seed. How can "they that are Christs," an expression embracing many individuals, be the seed of Abraahm, if that seed is *one*, and that one seed is Christ? Paul certainly seems to talk confusion here. He tells us first, and makes a special point of it, that the promised seed is a unit, not many but one, and then in the next breath as it were, he tell us that the promised seed embraces many, even all who are Christ's. Now the discrepancy here is of course only apparent, and all becomes perfectly plain when we understand the Bible mystery of

THE ONE BODY.

This is the very mystery that we have already referred to as being set forth in Ephesians iii., and in fact that

whole Epistle has to do chiefly with this great mystery. In plain language, without symbol or figure of speech, the mystery, as I understand it to be set forth in the Bible, is this: Jesus of Nazareth alone is not the complete Christ, *i. e.*, the Anointed; he is not the complete promised Seed. He is the first, and chief of a *class* embracing many individuals, "many sons" (Heb. ii. 10) and yet brought into such perfect unity and accord that they are spoken of as *one;* and this class, when complete and perfected, is *The* Christ, *The* Promised Seed, *The* Saviour of the world. In other words, God's plan is that the work of blessing and saving mankind, shall be accomplished, not by a single individual, but by a class of individuals, united in a corporate body so perfectly that there is but one mind and one spirit and one purpose and method and, in effect, one person. Such an idea as the above may seem very strange and erroneous to those who have not thought of it before, but it may be fully substantiated by the plainest and most positive Scripture. First, however, let us illustrate the thought outside of the Bible. Take the widely celebrated Police System of the great city of London. It is composed of thousands of individuals, and yet so thorough is the discipline, and so perfect the communication, that the stupendous energy of that vast organization may be concentrated, as though but a single individual, to the accomplishment of some one purpose. The Chief at the central office, with his finger upon the telegraphic key, is practically omnipresent throughout all the labyrinthine masses of the great metropolis; here we have an illustration of a vast number of individuals, so intimately blended together into one

body, that they can be controlled and directed almost as though they were actually but one individual; this great police system might very properly be represented by a human body; the chief being represented by the head, and the various members of the organization, with their different grades and functions, would be represented by the many and varied members of the human body. If one should use this figure in such connection, no intelligent person could fail of seeing its appropriateness and force. Now this is the very figure that the apostle uses to represent the Christ—the promised seed. Jesus the head, "they that are Christ's," the members; the whole but one body, seed, or Christ. "We being many are one body in Christ and every one members one of another" (Rom. xii. 5). "Know ye not that your bodies are the members of Christ?" (1 Cor. vi. 15); see also this figure carried out in every detail in (1 Cor. xii. 12-27), the apostle concluding thus, "Now ye are the body of Christ and members in particular;" see also Col. i. 18, 24; Eph. iv. 25; v. 30, etc.

Now in order that the reader may see that this is not merely a figure of speech, but an actual reality, I would refer him to Eph. i. 22, 23, where we are told that Christ is *not* complete without the church. The apostle says that God "gave him (Christ) to be the head over all things to the church, which is his body, the *fullness* of him that filleth all in all." The word rendered "fullness" is peculiar; we have no single English word that is exactly equivalent to it; it means, according to the Greek Lexicon, "that by which a thing is filled, a filling up, a completing." But we have an explanation of this word

that will be perfectly satisfactory to all Christians and Bible students, because it is a Bible explanation and by the Lord Jesus Himself. See Matt. ix. 16, and Mark ii. 21. "No man putteth a piece of new cloth unto an old garment, for *that which is put in to fill up* taketh from the garment and the rent is made worse." In this passage all the words in italics are from the one word which in Eph. i. 23, is translated "fullness." Here we have therefore the exact meaning of this peculiar word, so that we need have no doubt about it; and if Paul knew how to use words properly, we are to understand that the church is "that which is put in to fill up" Christ, or to make him complete—implying of course that he is not complete without the church. Now here is a wonderful revelation. Every Christian knows that "we are complete in him" (Col. ii. 10); few know however that he is complete in us—that the church is just as essential to Christ to make Him complete, as He is to the church to make it complete. Here is the great mystery of the One Body, and thus the *one* promised seed is made plain; it is composed of many members, but it constitutes but "one body" (Eph. iv. 4). It is a *class* of individuals, the "assembly," the "*Sons* of God," and yet it is a unit, because when perfected, and Christ's prayer is fulfilled, this company will be *one* with the Father and the Son—yea "perfect in one"—even as they, the Father and the Son are one (John xvii.).

(TO BE CONTINUED.)

STUDIES IN THE BIBLE.

THE JUDGE OF QUICK AND DEAD.

This is one of the official titles of the Christ. The apostles constantly presented Him in this character to their hearers, and gave great prominence to it. In the first official proclamation of the gospel to the Gentiles by Peter in the house of Cornelius, he declares: "And He charged us to preach unto the people, and to testify that this is He which is ordained of God to be the Judge of quick and dead" (Acts x. 42).

The term "quick" here is the translation of the Greek ζώντων. It occurs in several similar passages. It would have been better if the word were rendered uniformly "living," as we find it in Romans xiv. 9: "For to this end Christ both died, and rose, and revived, that He might be Lord both of the dead and the living." The objection to the archaic word "quick" is that many readers refer it to those who are to be quickened at Christ's coming, and so virtually identify this class with the "dead," who are then to be raised. The word refers to the living masses of mankind as distinct from the dead. And the two words together are designed to include both classes, and to set forth the universal character of the Messiah's judgment, as embracing all the families of the earth, both living and dead. This official title then comprehends the two aspects of His judgment which we have recently studied, and which are especially set forth in the two notable passages, Matt. xxv. 31-46 and John v. 29. In the first, as we have seen, the Christ

announces Himself as about to enter upon His glory as the Judge of the living nations of men. The scene, as we have seen, is laid before the resurrection. The subjects of the resurrection are not dead men raised, but living men, the wicked among whom are consigned to death. But, in John v., we have the judgment of the resurrected dead. "All who are in their graves" come forth to "the resurrection of judgment." These two great passages then bring before us this two-fold aspect of the Messiah's office as the ordained "Judge of both the living and the dead."

Here we have to enter our protest against the narrow view of this high office which prevails in the church and has been crystallized in even its most ancient creeds. The common impression is that these words refer to a grand court and pageant of the future, and that the judicial function of the Christ is mainly that of Chief-assessor of this court, at which all mankind shall be assembled, and the eternal destiny of every one be irrevocably fixed. In order to correct this view, one needs to study well the Old Testament prophecies and promises of His judgment. We use the word "promises" because these passages, while they do not conceal the vindicatory and retributive features of His judicial work, give equal prominence to its reformatory and beneficient results. Hence all nations, and even the earth and its inanimate creatures, are invited to rejoice together because of His judgments. There is far more of promise than of threat in the announcement that He shall judge the world in righteousness (Psalms xcvi. xcviii. Is. xi. Jer. xxiii.). The great mistake in our eschatology is, that it has not

brought over from the Old Testament these large and gracious views of the Messiah's judgment, with which to fill in the outlines of that larger conception of the Christ as Judge, presented in the New Testament. His office is there more clearly defined as comprehending the dead as well as the living. But its beneficence is not diminished by this enlargement. Because He is the Son of Man, all humanity is embraced by it. Not even the dead are shut out from its benefits. The resurrection of the Christ did not limit, it immensely enlarged the scope of His benign and saving work. "To this end Christ both died, and lived again, that He might be Lord, both of the dead and the living." The man who believes that death can in any way defeat His designs, or annul His promises, or limit the provisions of His grace, misses the very key to the right understanding of the Bible. From this point of view our explanation of "the resurrection of judgment," as designed to bring the dead within the sphere of His judicial reign, is seen to be required by this whole Biblical conception of His office. And indeed the context of John v. 29 requires this. For it is there stated that the reason why all judgment has been given by the Father into the hands of the Son is, "that all men may honor the Son even as they honor the Father" (verse 23). And that the term "all men" includes the dead is seen in the fact which Jesus proceeds to declare that the execution of this universal judgment requires an universal resurrection. All who are in their graves must hear His voice and come forth. This judgment does indeed involve the trial of all men according to their works. But it has also its corrective and benevolent features.

Resurrection is necessary in order to bring the generations of the dead who have not known of Christ within the sphere of that knowledge of Him which may prove their salvation, and that salutary control which shall humble them under His mighty hand. No one would think of denying that these large and merciful aspects of the Messiah's judgment of the world, as constantly set forth in the Old Testament, apply to the *living* nations of mankind; and that future generations of living men on the earth are to be thus blessed by it. But it is commonly assumed that these promises contain no hope for the dead. We therefore need to learn that, in their deepest meaning, and in the New Testament unfolding of them, this is precisely the glory of the Christ that He is "Lord both of the dead and of the living;" that He is Judge of both, and that His office of Judge, while it includes that of Arbiter of all human destinies, embraces also those judicial administrations by which all men shall learn to call Him Lord, to the glory of God the Father; and that even the dead are to be brought within the scope of His judgment, in this wide sense of it, through resurrection.

The announcement by the apostles, therefore, of Jesus as Judge of the quick and the dead, is part of His *gospel.* It was included in the glad tidings that they were sent forth to preach. When they testified that Jesus was now raised to be both Lord and Christ, they thereby affirmed that all the ancient promises concerning the Messiah were about to be fulfilled in Him, and that these promises were so broad as to cover the realms of the dead as well as of the living. This gospel did indeed bring with

it severe and searching tests. It offered no other standard of admission to God's presence than a clean heart. It foretold a purging of the world's floor by the flail of His judgments, and a burning up of the chaff with unquenchable fire. The Old Testament prophecies had intimated as much. And yet there was always a glow of light on this dark back-ground. He would send forth judgment unto victory. And so the New Testament announcements of the Christ as King and Judge of men form a part of the glad tidings of His salvation. And nothing was further from the minds of the apostles than to shut out all the generations of the dead from any interest in the good news. The fact that they longed for His coming in their own day, proves that, instead of viewing that event as putting an end to Christ's redeeming work, it would only then enter upon these wider fields of its conquest.

It is also apparent from these announcements that the Christ has already assumed this office. We have been taught to believe that "He shall come to judge the quick and the dead." So far as the dead are concerned, they do not properly come under His reign of judgment until they are raised at His coming. They are raised in order to be thus judged. But the living are all the time being assembled before His throne, and being sorted into sheep and goats. Nor are the dead, even now, apart from His control. The terms used of His investiture with His office of Judge, show that it is not the vague and distant thing which men usually conceive it to be. At Athens Paul declared that God had appointed a day, in the which He is about to judge (*μέλλει κρίνειν*) the world in righteous-

ness, by that man whom He had ordained, the proof of which was that He had now raised Him from the dead (Acts xvii. 31). So again he charges Timothy (2. iv. 1) before God and the Lord Jesus Christ, who is about to judge the quick and the dead. The same Greek words are employed. And Peter (1 iv. 5) speaks of Him as "*ready* to judge the quick and the dead." And again, that "the time *is come* for judgment to begin at the house of God" (iv. 17). All these passages speak of the Christ as having already assumed this office, and as being on the point of executing it. Our exegesis of Matt. xxv. 31–46 proved to us what reality there is in this conception of His judgment. Indeed what the world, and the church also, need to-day, is such an opening of the eyes as was given to Elisha's servant, that men may see how the very atmosphere in which they live their daily life, is alive and tremulous with the chariots of His judgments. All the forces of nature are the angels of His might. Nor are we by any means sure that the judgment of the dead is wholly future. Such passages as 1 Peter iii. 19, 20 and iv. 6 convey intimations that, at least in certain aspects of it, it began when He ascended on high, leading captivity captive.

It will be seen that we are all along pleading for a larger conception of His office as Judge than has prevailed in the church,—one that will make room for both the aspects of it presented in Scripture, the retributive and the redemptive, and one that will take in the present age, as well as that which is to come. His judgment of the world in righteousness is a much nearer and broader work than men imagine it to be. The idea of a great

assize is certainly a scriptural one, but it is only one aspect of His judgment. Corrective discipline, afflictive strokes that humble even the disobedient to His yoke, benignant rule, the liberation of those who are held captive by the chains of sin and Satan, and in the hands of death, the overthrow of these malign and potent enemies of man, the emancipation of the creature from their blight and corruption, the final destruction of incorrigible enemies, all these pertain to His office as "Judge of quick and dead," "the Lord both of the dead and of the living." If we view His office only in one of its functions, however important, we shall miss the meaning of the whole of it. Or if we limit the benefits of it to the living, we shall virtually deny that He is the Conqueror of death, or that there is any gospel for the dead in the fact that He died and rose again. And yet St. Peter assures us that He Himself preached these glad tidings to the spirits in prison, who aforetime were disobedient in the days of Noah (iii. 19), and that the gospel was, "preached even to the dead, that they might be judged according to men in the flesh, but live according to God in the Spirit" (iv. 6).

In order to guard against mistake, we repeat what we have often before affirmed, that these wider views of the scope of Christ's redeeming work do not require us to believe that all will at last be saved by it. They only teach that death does not cut short or limit that work but that, in providing resurrection for all, it has provided to bring the kingdoms of the dead, as well as of the living, within its wide range of blessing.

NOTES ON CURRENT OPINIONS AND EVENTS.

THE OUTLOOK OF THE WORLD.—Bishop Randolph S. Foster, of the Methodist Episcopal Church, has recently published a series of articles in the *Independent*, upon this subject. His general view is that the forces against which the church has to contend, both in heathendom and Christendom, are greatly underestimated, and that, although victory is sure at last for the church, the signs of its near approach are but faint. Out of a total population of about 1,450,000,000 he estimates that the enormous aggregate of nearly 1,100,000,000 are practically heathen or non-Christian. With regard to the problem of the future of this multitude of souls he offers no solution, except to say,

"I raise no question about whether these countless millions can be saved in the world to come. I do not affirm that giving them the Gospel will improve their prospects or at all increase their chances in that direction. Possibly as many of them will be saved without the Gospel as with it. That question does not come into the problem which I am discussing—the outlook of the world—by which I mean the outlook of the world for time, not for eternity. If the awful thought could once take possession of my mind that the whole heathen world must, of necessity, be lost forever, simply because they are heathen, I would not send them a Gospel which reveals such a God. That grim thought alone would shut out all hope for the world, and make eternity itself a dungeon, no difference who might be saved. For how could any rational creature enjoy even a Heaven with a God whose government could permit such a stain of shame and dishonor, of cruelty and injustice? It is dreadful enough to be compelled to accept the thought that an immortal being can, by his own free guilt, work out a destiny of changeless evil; convince men that there is a God at the head of the universe, who, without fault of theirs, or any chance of escape, will damn the dead, the living, and the yet-to-live millions of heathenism, and you make it forever impossible that He should be worshipped by any but devils, and by them only because He becomes their chief, and at the same time turn earth into a gigantic terror, whose ghastly horrors will admit of no relief. Such a thought makes it impossible that there should be any Gospel for men.

"The problem I deal with relates to this world. Have you ever visited heathen lands? Have you ever formed to your mind

an idea of their actual condition? Any idea you may have formed will be inadequate, I am sure. It will take an effort if you have no experience to guide you, and even to reproduce it would be almost impossible.

"Call to your aid all the images of poverty and degradation you have ever seen in solitary places of the extremest wretchedness —those sad cases which haunted you with horror after you passed from them, those dreary abodes of filth and gaunt squalor—crowd them into one picture, unrelieved by a single shade of tempered darkness or colored light, and hang it over one half the globe; it will still fail to equal the reality. You must put into it the dreary prospect of hopeless continuance; you must take out of it all hope, all aspiration even. The conspicuous feature of heathenism is poverty. You have never seen poverty. It is a word the meaning of which you do not know. What you call poverty is wealth, luxury. Think of it not as occasional, not as in purlieus, not as exceptional in places of deeper misery, but as universal, continent-wide. Put in it hunger, nakedness, bestiality; take out of it expectation of something better to-morrow; fill Africa with it, fill Asia with it; crowd the vision with men, women and children in multitude more than twenty times the population of all your great cities, towns, villages and rural districts, twenty for every one in all your states and territories—the picture then fails to reach the reality.

"Put, now, into the picture the moral shading of no God, no hope; these miserable millions, living like beasts in this world and anticipating nothing better for the world to come. Put into the picture the remembrance that they are beings who have the same humanity that we have, that are in this case; that there are no hearts among all these millions that do not have human cravings, and that might not be purified and ennobled; that these lands, under the doom of such wretchedness, might equal, and many of them even surpass, the land in which we dwell, had they what we could give them. Paint a starless sky, hang your picture with night, drape the mountains with long, far-reaching vistas of darkness, hang the curtains deep along every shore and landscape, darken all the past, let the future be draped in deeper and yet deeper night, fill the awful gloom with hungry, sad-faced and sorrow-driven women and hopeless children—it is the heathen world—the people seen in vision by the ancient prophet, 'who sit in the region and shadow of death;' to whom no light has yet come, sitting there still, through the long, long night, waiting and watching for the morning."

We quote this strong language, not as approving it, but because it reveals the hopelessness in which this dark problem of the world present itself to a man who has been

trained in the current Christian thinking, which assumes that the destiny of these vast multitudes is fixed forever by the issues of this present life, and that God's redemptive economy does not reach beyond this present age. Such men usually seek some relief by lowering the condition of salvation from faith in a known Christ to faith in an unknown, and so open a door of mercy for a few devout and enlightened souls. How much better it is to hold fast by the strict terms of the gospel way of life, and accept the relief which Scripture affords in the hope that the Son of Man's mission to seek and save the lost cannot be estopped by death. The true Scriptural key to these dark mysteries of the world lies in the redemptive character of resurrection, and in the fact that, under the coming administration of the Anointed King and Judge of men, there are new operations of grace toward these sinning, dying multitudes, secured to them in the fact that they are to be raised from the dead. Not until then shall we know the true value of the gift from God to the world of One who was to be a "light to them that sit in darkness and in the shadow of death." Missionary efforts will hasten the emancipation of the earth from this heavy curse of sin and woe, only as they contribute to the gathering and perfection of the elect out of all nations who constitute the Christ-body, the chosen seed, in whom all these families of the earth shall yet be blessed. For "in this mountain (this chosen seat of His power and grace) shall the Lord of hosts make unto all people a feast of fat things, a feast of wines on the lees, of fat things full of marrow, of wines on the lees well refined. And He will destroy in this mountain the face of the covering cast over all people, and the vail that is spread over all nations. HE WILL SWALLOW UP DEATH IN VICTORY: and the Lord God will wipe away all tears from off all faces; and the rebuke of His people shall He take away from off all the earth: for the Lord hath spoken it. And it shall be said in that day, Lo, this is our God: we have waited for Him and He will save us: this is the Lord: we have waited for Him, we will be glad and rejoice in His salvation" (Is. xxv. 6–9).

To confine this glorious promise to the generations of some distant future, and to exclude from it all the generations of the past who have died without the sight, is to deny that "to this end Christ

died and lived again, that He might be Lord of the *dead*, as well as of the living."

PROF. SHEDD'S FOREBODINGS. The *Sunday-school Times* reports Prof. Shedd as saying: "No theological tenet is more important than that of eternal retribution, to those modern nations, which, like England, Germany and the United States, are growing rapidly in riches, luxury and earthly power. Without it they will infallibly go down in that vortex of sensuality and wickedness that swallowed up Babylon and Rome."

No one believes more strongly in the certainty of divine retribution for sin than do we, and that the end of incorrigible sinners will be "the lake of fire which is the second death." But by "eternal retribution," Dr. Shedd means the doctrine of endless torment in hell for all who die out of this life unsaved, in the defence of which he has recently published a book. And his argument is for the expediency of holding on to that doctrine as a defence against threatening destruction. To this we reply,

1. In this momentous matter only that which is *true* is expedient.

2. Dr. Shedd's remedy has historically failed. It did not save the world from the fearful anarchy and social wreck of the French Revolution.

3. The modern nations he refers to have not been restrained by it from developing the evils which he deplores.

4. Perhaps the false view of God involved in this doctrine is largely responsible for this "departing from Him, desiring not the knowledge of His ways." The current doctrine in the church on this subject, in hiding from men any hope for any class of mankind in any of His administrations beyond the grave, has concealed a part of His gospel, and denied His fatherhood. Wrong views of His relation to the race necessitate wrong views of His relation to individual men, and so sour and harden them against God. What the world is perishing for is the lack of the knowledge of God.

5. If Dr. Shedd's doctrine is therefore now needful for the defence of society against ruin, it is so because it has helped to

bring society into this state of danger by drawing a frowning mask over the face of God, and so repelling them from Him.

6. There are intimations in Scripture that there were to be larger unfoldings of the grace of God to mankind, as they were able to bear it. "Who gave Himself a ransom for all; to be testified to in its own times" (1 Tim. ii. 6).

7. In the general decay of the old doctrine of future punishment, which was doubtless a great restraint in ruder times, the world now needs a new presentation of the majesty and certainty of God's law of punishment. The church needs to be warned anew that "The Lord shall judge *His people:*" And that "*Our* God is a consuming fire." The world needs a doctrine of punishment, not so vast and vague and inconceivable, that both reason and conscience reject it, but one that shall convince them that, in all the laws of nature and of life, and of human society, the eyes of the Lord are now "open upon all the ways of the sons of men; to give every one according to his ways, and according to the fruit of his doings," and that His great harvest law is surer than the motions of the stars, for this world and for all worlds. "Be not deceived; God is not mocked: for whatsoever a man soweth that shall he also reap." God's great love has provided a ransom for all from death, but even resurrection, which is to all a boon, must proceed according to this great law of harvest, and bring with it "judgment" for those "that have done evil."

MR. MOODY'S PREACHING.—In this connection we refer to a letter of Dr. A. E. Kittredge, in the *Independent* of January 28, describing Mr. Moody's late visit to Chicago, in which he indicates that the power of his preaching is largely due to his ability to impress men's minds with the conviction that God loves them. He quotes these as characteristic sentences from one of his sermons:

"God always loves us. He hates sin, but He loves the sinner. He loves because He can't help it."

"There is one thing that death has never been able to conquer, and that is a mother's love."

"Our love is changing, but He loves us right on, through all our sorrows and our sins."

"Because God is angry with the sinner, it proves that He loves him."

"His love is unchanging, unfailing, and everlasting."

These sentences illustrate how Mr. Moody, although holding theoretically the orthodox doctrine of an eternal hell, keeps it in the background, where he has no right to keep it, if true, and how he moves men by a fresh revelation to them of the fact that God's love for them is deeper than their sins. If God's love is "stronger than a mother's," if "death cannot conquer it," if it continues "right on, through all our sorrows and sins," and if even His anger is the dark side of His love, we may well ask what room is left for the creed doctrine that, for the sins of this life, He will first torment the soul of the sinner in hell, and then raise him in body, in order to thrust him back to be punished "in body and soul, with unspeakable torments, with the devil and his angels, in hell-fire forever." (See questions 29 and 89, Larger Catechism).

There is immense power in the long-concealed doctrine of God's love to men. And the proof that death cannot conquer it, as Mr. Moody affirms, is found in the fact that He gave His Son to effect the ransom of all from death, and that its conquests extend through the realms of the dead. The redemptive character of resurrection is the proof out of Scripture that men need, that God's love is stronger than death. Knowing this, there will be no longer any temptation to conceal from them the other side of truth, which is too much absent from Mr. Moody's sermons, that "He will render to every man according to His works," and that the atonement is not a makeshift, by which any man may escape the just consequences of his sins, but a wonderful alembic of love by which these necessary judgments are for us converted into the way of life.

A MISTAKE.—Our friend Dr. Bacon, in whose recent volume of sermons we have found so much to commend, falls into the very common mistake (p. 270) of assuming that our Lord's fearful words about the "outer darkness," "the unquenchable fire," "the undying worm," "weeping and gnashing of teeth" were spoken "to warn the guilty multitude to flee from coming wrath." On the contrary, there is no evidence that our Lord ever uttered such warnings in the ears of the multitude. If Dr. Bacon will carefully examine the connection, he will find that in every case these words occur in private conversations with His disciples.

ANSWERS TO CORRESPONDENTS.

An esteemed correspondent, who writes to renew his subscription, says:

"I differ with you now as fundamentally as I did a year ago. I cannot see why, if Satan and his angels, who are simply creatures, are to live forever in punishment, why not man? If the beast and the false prophet, two human beings, are to live in hell for a thousand years before Satan goes into it, and are alive when he does go into it, why may not these two men continue to keep alive in hell forever? They will be alive then, and continue to suffer the wrath of God forever, for the Greek verb is in the plural. "They," the three, "shall be tormented day and night forever and ever" (Rev. xx. 10).

"Moreover, how can the fire be called unquenchable, if that on which it feeds is consumed away? How can it continue to burn when the fuel is gone? No, the wicked shall be salted with fire and thus be preserved, and if the race is to multiply forever, and the whole universe of God be filled with the endless procreation of the human race, cleansed and restored and standing in federal relation to the second Adam, I can see a necessity in the moral government of God, why Satan and his angels, and the lost of the Adamic race, prior to the said restitution, should remain in eternal punishment as an object lesson to all the comers after through all the endless round of ages; for the history of the first Adam, with his world and his lost race and burned-up earth, will be that which will be taught to all the coming generations."

In reply, we would ask of this brother:

1. Is he sure that the beast and the false prophet are human persons? Is not the term "beast" the uniform Scripture symbol for worldly powers, whose principle of rule is of the earth, earthy? Are the four beasts of Daniel's vision (chap. vii), one of whom was 'given to be burned with fire," while the lives of the others were prolonged for a season, persons?

2. Did it ever occur to him that the idea of an order of evil beings, *immortally embodied*, is foreign to Scripture and to the whole plan of God in Creation? The disinherited in this system are disembodied. Satan and his evil angels are *spirits*. There is no immortal manhood out of Christ. And, therefore, there is no place in God's plan for a realm of lost *men*, eternally existent, such

as he supposes. The lost, if not put out of being, must at least die out of manhood.

3. Would our friend say that when the Lord declares, through Jeremiah (xvii. 17), "I will kindle a fire in the gates thereof, and it shall devour the palaces of Jerusalem, and it *shall not be quenched*," that these gates and palaces must be burning yet? Was not the Messiah to *burn up* the chaff with unquenchable fire?

4. It is a sad proof of the blinding power of his hard doctrine that the saying of our Saviour (Mark ix. 49), "For every one shall be salted with fire," can be so perverted as to present Him in such an unlovely character. Is it possible that our friend's Christian heart does not revolt from his own explanation of this text. If, as Jesus says, *every one* is to be salted with fire, are we not all included? He is, in this whole passage, enforcing the law of self-sacrifice upon *disciples*, as the only way of life. And *every one of us* must make a complete surrender of our old nature to the burning, if we would become acceptable sacrifices upon the altar of God.

5. If the land of Idumea was to be consumed with fire and brimstone, as we are told in Isaiah xxxiv. 9, 10, "It shall not be quenched night nor day; the smoke thereof shall goup forever," may it not be possible that our correspondent may be mistaken in the bold inferences he draws from the similar expressions in Revelation?

WANT of space prevents us from publishing in full the letter of "Presbyterian Elder," in which he reflects severely upon the action of the Presbytery in refusing to receive Dr. Bacon. He says, "Having just read your February number, I venture, at this late date, to say that your article on this subject expresses the sentiments of many—very many—good and loyal Presbyterians." The writer comments upon the Presbytery's inconsistency in recognizing Dr. Bacon as an authorized minister of Jesus Christ, fit to supply one of its pulpits, and yet refusing him full fellowship, and predicts that such action will create "a growing feeling of antagonism to Presbyterianism," and adds, "You may well suggest, Mr. Editor, a revision of the standards, and might well have added to the suggestion, 'the government and discipline of the Presbyterian Church.'"

This whole question resolves itself into this: Has any body of Christians a right to organize itself into a "church," and claim the right to administer church discipline in the name of the Lord Jesus Christ upon any narrower basis than that of the church? Has any such body the right to conduct its affairs, or even to exist, as a *sect*?